

can also get CORY in the occasional pickle. I remember recently that just months after the Senator was sworn in, he and I were on a codel together in the Middle East. I think the itinerary was something like eight countries in 6 days.

At one point, we were waiting to meet with a foreign leader. As everyone else was just waiting patiently in this grand palace, CORY spots what looks like a stray piece of paper lying on the floor. Earnestly thinking he should leave the place better than he found it, CORY bends over and picks up the trash—except, it wasn't trash. Just then, the Monarch rolls in with a color guard—a color guard that is looking anxiously for the floor marker that was supposed to indicate where to stop marching. Luckily, the only diplomatic fallout was a good laugh by all.

Actually, good laughs tend to follow CORY in his wake. Our colleague finds humor in the “everyday” like few can and shares it freely.

I understand one of his favorite stories concerns a chat in the well with yours truly and former Senator Orrin Hatch. CORY was filling me in on his efforts to legalize marijuana in States like his. Orrin comes by, and sensing an ally, I pulled him in. I said:

Orrin, is this true? What the heck is going on out West?

Without missing a beat, our friend from Utah, a member of the LDS Church, shook his head sadly and said: “First, it was tea. Then, coffee. And now this!”

CORY's version of this story comes complete with his finest Hatch and McConnell impersonations. Believe me, he has the voices down pat.

For 6 years, Coloradans have been represented by this remarkable person who lives and works with relentless focus and infectious joy: globe-trotting diplomacy, a thick stack of signature bills signed into law, and generational accomplishments that were only possible because he was here.

CORY likes to say himself: “Not bad for a boy from Yuma, CO!” We know what he means, but I have to observe that CORY's roots and his accomplishments are not in conflict—quite the contrary. It is only because CORY GARDNER is exactly who he is that he is able to do what he does.

CORY, everyone knows darn well your transition is no “retirement.” This is a brief pause between great chapters. I bet Jaime will call it a victory if she, Alyson, Thatcher, and Caitlyn can just get you to sit still—just sit still—and stay home through the holidays.

But we all know it will take about 5 minutes before you have found a dozen new ways to keep doing big things, winning victories on behalf of others, and paying forward the ways in which you have been blessed. Colorado and your country aren't finished with you yet, not by a long shot. So thank you for everything. We will miss you badly around here, but we can't wait to see what course you chart next.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—Conference Report—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 6395, which will be stated by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 6395), to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2021 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

(The conference report is printed in the House proceedings of the RECORD of December 3, 2020.)

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, with each passing day, we get another round of news underscoring how costly this pandemic has been. Yesterday, over 3,000 Americans—3,000—died from COVID-19, the highest single-day death toll to date.

If you were making a list of some of the deadliest days in American history, your mind would jump to Gettysburg, Antietam, Pearl Harbor, or 9/11. You can now add to that somber list last Thursday, Wednesday, last Tuesday, last Friday, and yesterday. Each day, nearly 2,500 Americans or more lost their lives to COVID in the course of a single day.

Now time is running out for Congress to finish our most pressing priority: passing an emergency COVID relief bill to help American families in need.

Right now, there is one clear path to getting an outcome: a bipartisan group of Senators and House Members who have reached an initial agreement on another emergency relief bill. In the spirit of compromise and for the sake of getting something done for the American people, Speaker PELOSI and I have endorsed those efforts as a framework for a final bill.

Everyone knows that this bipartisan proposal is the only real game in town at the moment, the only proposal with enough bipartisan support to, hopefully, pass both Houses of Congress before the end of the year. Everyone knows that, it seems, except Leader MCCONNELL, who continues to stand in the way of bipartisan progress and who seems to wake up each morning with a new round of outlandish reasons why Democrats are somehow to blame for all the world's ills.

As the bipartisan group of Senators continue to work toward a final agreement, I want to address an incredibly false equivalency that has been drawn between two provisions: providing aid to State and local services—essential State and local services—and granting sweeping immunity to corporations that put their workers in harm's way during the pandemic.

You will hear voices say: Democrats want to fund State and local services while Republicans—that is, Leader MCCONNELL—want a corporate liability shield. Each side wants something that the other side doesn't want to accept. But as I said, this is a false equivalency, incredibly false, for two reasons.

First, State and local aid has broad bipartisan support, totally unlike the Republican leader's liability provision, which is expressly partisan. Let me say that again because it is important. There is strong bipartisan support for State and local aid. There is not the same broad bipartisan support for sweeping corporate immunity.

Second, the two policies are not remotely equivalent in terms of importance or relevance to what is going on in our country right now. When we talk about providing Federal aid so the States don't have to cut essential services, we are talking about saving lives, and we are talking about saving jobs. We are talking about boosting the economy. According to the Congressional Budget Office, money for State and local government creates the best bang for the buck for the economy from any spending Congress is considering.

State and local aid is a policy with a nationwide reach. It would solve a real, immediate problem. On the other hand, when Republicans talk about giving corporate indemnity, they are talking about a solution in search of a problem. To date, there have been 20—only 20—some-odd personal injury lawsuits filed in the entire country.

The bottom line is, one provision solves a real problem in our country; the other does not. The two sides are not remotely equivalent, and it is not a trade that makes any sense in terms of the well-being of the American people.

Now, I know the Republican leader and Senate Republicans want to help small businesses and re-up the popular PPP to help prevent businesses from folding and American workers from being laid off. So do I. So do Democrats. Well, guess what. State and local relief is also about American workers

getting laid off too. If you want PPP so small businesses don't lay off people, why wouldn't you want State and local aid so governments don't lay off people? They are the same people who need to feed their families, pay their rent, pay their mortgage, and get on with life.

State and local relief is about American workers getting laid off. It is about firefighters getting laid off. It is about first responders getting laid off. It is about teachers getting laid off, busdrivers, sanitation workers, essential employees—men and women who have been working since the pandemic began and risking their lives to keep our country moving. It is impossible to imagine any community in this country functioning without them.

And this morning we learned that an additional 1.4 million Americans filed new unemployment claims—a huge spike from the previous week. If you want to save jobs, if you want to make sure those numbers don't go up, we need PPP for small businesses, and we need State and local aid for our governments because both aid those entities and prevent people from being laid off and unemployment from going up.

The liability provisions of the leader have nothing to do with that and in fact only affect a very small number of lawsuits.

So if we are going to be here on the floor and talking about saving jobs, we have to talk about saving the jobs of essential public employees. They deserve our help too. They are no different than anyone else, whether they are in a red State or a blue State.

Make no mistake, right now there is one person—just one person—standing in the way, and that is Leader McCONNELL.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Madam President, now on another matter, despite the fact that the Presidential election ended well over a month ago and that, by now, every single State in the country and the District of Columbia has certified results, there are still many on the political right who refuse to accept reality.

Today, amazingly enough, 17 Republican attorneys general will meet with President Trump to discuss their desperate and wildly irresponsible lawsuit, which aims to literally overturn the will of the people on the grounds they didn't like the results.

This has gone beyond ridiculous. No court in this country has found any of President Trump's claims of widespread voter fraud credible. No serious State election official, Democrat or Republican, has found them credible. Even the Trump administration's Justice Department, so browbeaten into political activities over the past 4 years, has not found a scrap of evidence that would affect the final result.

Yet, rather than accept the simple truth that Joe Biden will be the next President of the United States, there are actually sitting Senators and Congress Members who prefer to under-

mine our democracy by indulging President Trump's wild conspiracy theories about a stolen election.

Here in the Senate, the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee announced yesterday that next week he will convene a hearing on "election irregularities." When is this nonsense, detrimental to our democracy, going to end? When?

It is already deeply irresponsible for my Republican colleagues, many of them, to stay silent about President Trump's deliberate attempts to poison Americans' faith in our elections. It is deeply irresponsible that there hasn't been a full-throated defense of the validity of our elections by Republican Senators and the Republican leader, who still refuse to call Joe Biden "President-Elect." But to go one step further and use a Senate committee as a platform to spread misinformation about our own elections is beyond the pale.

So, in conclusion, Chairman JOHNSON should call off this ridiculous charade of a Senate hearing immediately. If he won't, Leader McCONNELL should intervene to ensure that the committee does not indulge such quackery and conspiracy theories, and he should acknowledge the results of the election and make clear it is time to move on, just as he was happy to do so when the shoe was on the other foot. Doing otherwise would add fuel to the fire that is undermining faith in our wonderful democracy.

TRIBUTE TO PAT ROBERTS

Madam President, finally, just a note: I, too, want to bid a fond, fond farewell to the Senator from Kansas, a wonderful guy and a great guy.

I learned how good he was when we met on the basketball courts in the House. He set the best picks of anybody. He would quietly sneak up on you, you would be dribbling or moving, and boom. He knows.

But as good as he was at picks, he was very fine at legislating, and he is just a fine human being whom I think just about every Member on this side of the aisle will very much miss.

So, PATTY, we wish you and your family the very, very best.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Kansas.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, my colleagues, first, I thank the leadership on both sides for this opportunity to give a PAT ROBERTS "adios, amigos" speech.

The story of how I got into politics is a pretty straight family path. As a fourth-generation Kansan, my great-grandfathers on both sides of the Roberts-Patrick family were pioneer newspaper editors who came to Kansas as crusading abolitionists. To say I bleed fourth-generation printer's ink would be very close to the truth.

However, the main influence that drew me to public service was my dad, Wes Roberts, who was a newspaper

man. And soon journalism led to politics. He served as chief of staff and adviser for several Kansas Governors, becoming then the State Republican chairman.

In 1952, my dad was asked to head up the Citizens for Ike campaign, which was a genuine army of volunteers made up of legions of veterans, women's groups, and mostly Republicans who wanted a candidate who could win. Plus, they really liked Ike.

At 16, in my dad's tow, I was the sergeant at arms at the 1952 convention, back when conventions actually chose the nominee for President. I vividly remember two lasting experiences: The renowned Senator from Illinois, Everett Dirksen, was a key leader in the Bob Taft campaign. Senator Dirksen, known for his long, eloquent speeches, was in the midst of his convention remarks when the entire New York delegation, led by former Governor and Presidential candidate Tom Dewey, marched in, and with considerable noise they took their seats.

Dirksen paused and, pointing directly at Dewey and with his booming voice, said this: You, sir, have led this party—this Republican Party—down to defeat in 1944 and again in 1948. Don't do it again.

Whereupon, the entire New York delegation stood up and gave Dirksen the raspberry, and I thought: This is what adults do at a convention? (Laughter.)

One morning I was in a meeting with my dad with the top Ike campaign brass—Dewey, Lodge, Brownell, and other GOP movers and shakers. He told me to sit and be quiet. He was in the midst of suggesting the "fair play" amendment, given that the new Ike delegates from the solid South had surprised the old guard and won delegate seats at the State convention, only to be replaced by the old guard at later surprise conventions. Unlike MacArthur, old guards never die or fade away.

My dad said there was no downside if they lost, and he believed they could win a majority of delegates. The "fair play" amendment passed, and Ike won on the first ballot. I thought to myself: Wow. My dad actually helped Ike win.

I met the general. I shook his hand—and then again at the 1953 inaugural ceremonies when my dad became the Republican national chairman.

It was these reflections, told to my great friend and Medal of Honor recipient Senator Danny Inouye, that prompted him to say: PAT, I fought for Ike. You met him. It is up to you to get this memorial done.

And after a 21-year effort, we did just that, with help from Bob Dole, Jim Baker, Susan Eisenhower, the Eisenhower family, and Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, who kept the Ike commission going through these tough years. Finally, we now have an appropriate, if not stunning, memorial to the Kansan who saved Western democracy and World War II and led America onto the world stage.

With the final dedication of the Dwight David Eisenhower Memorial at the end of my Senate career, it is a full family-circle accomplishment. If my dad helped elect Ike, then the least I could do was to lead the effort to make the memorial on the Mall to a great general and President a reality.

In a homecoming address, Eisenhower famously said: "The proudest thing I can claim is that I am from Abilene." He was a small-town Kansas boy who saved Western democracy and led the Nation for 8 years with peace and prosperity.

Well, I too come from a small town in Kansas. So how did this boy from Holton, KS, become the longest serving Member of Congress in Kansas history? Like father, like son. I graduated from K-State with a degree in journalism. My father joined the Marines in World War II and saw action in both Okinawa and Iwo Jima. I joined in peacetime and served in Okinawa and was part of the first Marine contingent to return to Iwo Jima on the 15th anniversary of that battle.

So from Marine captain to newspaper editor and news director of a radio station in Arizona, I dropped everything and drove to Washington when Senator Frank Carlson asked me to come and work for him. Within weeks of leaving Phoenix, I was the chief of staff for Senator Frank Carlson, a venerable and highly respected Senator who made his mark on Kansas history as the only person to serve our State as Congressman, Governor, Senator, UN delegate, and the founder of the National Prayer Breakfast.

Life changed dramatically at that time. I always thought a bachelor was a man who did not make the same mistake once.

(Laughter.)

Then into my life came a tall, blonde, blue-eyed magnolia blossom from South Carolina. Franki and I have been married for 51 years and have been blessed with three children and eight grandchildren. I am who I am because Franki is my wife and we are parents to David, Ashleigh, Ann Wesley, Papa PAT to Lorena, Patrick, Sayaka, Lilly, Charlie—Charlie bear—Miles, Oliver, and Graham.

My family is my crowning—my crowning—achievement.

Senator Frank was a great mentor. He always said: There are no self-made men or women in public office; it is your friends and family who make you what you are.

He taught me a great lesson: Your true friends stand behind you when you are taking the bows and beside you when there are any boos.

Following the 2-year stint with the Senator, I was privileged to work 12 years for the newly elected Congressman from the big First District of Kansas as his chief of staff.

Keith Sebelius was a wonderful man, a leader on the House Agriculture Committee and the Interior Committee, especially with regard to improvements

and restoration of our national parks. Upon Keith's retirement, a group of party stalwarts encouraged me to run. I thought about it, talked to Franki. Franki simply said: Well, this is what you always wanted to do. Let's do it.

So for 9 months, with no paycheck or health insurance and limited savings, with three young children, Dodge City became our home. Most sane candidates would not attempt to go door-to-door in a district larger than most States; however, with a lot of help, we won a tough primary and a not-so-tough general election—the first of 24 straight victories.

I was ranking to Chairman Kika de la Garza when the 1994 revolution put Republicans in the majority after being in the wilderness for over 40 years. Suddenly I was chairman.

In 1996, we achieved a major farm policy reform, changing 40 years of farm bill policy. To this day, farmers still have the freedom to farm what they want.

I have had the honor and privilege of representing Kansas for 16 years in the House and now 24 in the Senate. The PAT ROBERTS of 1980 was fighting for Kansas values and for the issues that affected the daily lives and pocket-books of all Kansans.

As the PAT ROBERTS of 1996, I promised that if elected to the Senate, when Kansas spoke, Washington would listen.

I have held six gavels in the House and Senate, and that in and of itself might be a record, but it is what happened during my tenures as chairman that I believe I have had the most lasting effects. It is not just having the gavel; it is what you do with it.

Taking part and leading eight farm bills in the House and the Senate, I have touched and improved many lives, and I have always been mindful of what farm families do for our Nation and a troubled and hungry world as we crafted each bill.

I was fortunate that my first committee assignments were to serve on the Armed Services Committee as well as Agriculture. Strom Thurmond was the very senior chairman who, as the country song goes, never even called me by my name. I was recognized as "the Senator who had the good sense to marry a fine, beautiful, South Carolina girl."

(Laughter.)

My role on the Armed Services Committee was simple. It was to collect the small change left by the Air Force to enable the Marine Corps to continue to be our Nation's force in readiness, not to mention the new Warfighting Lab.

I also had the privilege of being the Senate Intelligence Committee chairman for 4 years during the Iraq war and led the committee's investigation that exposed a worldwide intelligence failure—and it resulted in a blueprint of the 9/11 Commission and a better intelligence community that did keep our country safe.

As chairman of the brandnew Emerging Threat Subcommittee within the

Armed Services Committee, I traveled to cities within what remained of the former Soviet Union. In one of the Soviet Union secret cities, we discovered a lab that had developed strains of pathogens that could do irreparable harm to our Nation's food supply. Talk about an evil empire. I caution my colleagues: That threat still exists, even as we endeavor to continue the worldwide fight against COVID-19.

It has taken over 20 years to respond to this threat with a biological containment and research lab, and we are still not done. I have put a lifetime of work into NBADF, the National Bio and Agriculture Defense Facility—Paws from Manhattan, KS—home of Kansas State University with the ever optimistic Wildcats, Manhattan, KS. It will soon serve as the first line of defense to protect American agriculture and the world's food supply.

I have also been privileged to serve on the HELP Committee. Thank you to LAMAR ALEXANDER and to PATTY MURRAY for supporting my amendments, especially with regard to rural healthcare.

And, finally, I have chaired the Senate Ethics Committee for 24 years. I have tried to resign twice. I don't know what I have done wrong, but I have been a member of that committee for what I am sure is a record 24 years. I think they just want somebody there to say: Wait a minute. Fifteen years ago, we tried that, and it didn't work. Maybe we ought to start over.

As I move out of my office—formerly a veritable museum of pictures, awards, and stuff that we all collect—all that remains are the barren beige walls, full of memories and stories—all of which, of course, are classified. However, I still have my Marine Corps bumper sticker: "To err is human, to forgive is divine." Neither is Marine Corps policy. Marines never give up. We take the hill. The discipline and focus I learned in the Marine Corps never failed me in my toughest battles here in the Senate. Semper fi. Semper fi, Dan. And still in the office, of course, is a framed statement with the advice of LBJ, Lyndon Baines Johnson: "Sometimes you just have to hunker down like a jackass in a hailstorm and just take it."

On that note, if you want to avoid a hailstorm, get a good staff. You are only as good as your staff—and I have the best staff in Washington. I know everybody thinks that, but I really do because they always—they always took the hill.

My chiefs of staff, Leroy Towns, Jackie Cottrell, and Chad Tennpenny; my DC deputy chief of staff, Amber Kirchhoefer; and my Ag Committee staff directors, Mike Seyfert, Joel Leftwich, and James Glueck—they led the posse. And they always checked to make sure that the herd was still there and we didn't ride into any boxed canyons.

To the staff currently in this Chamber with me, and those watching on C-

SPAN, thank you. It has been an absolute privilege and an honor to have you call me boss. Always remember you are a family. I couldn't have asked for a more loyal and dedicated or talented staff.

To be a Member of this U.S. Senate is a true privilege—a working family. It is the greatest deliberative body in the world. But today as compared to when I first came to the Senate, it is the deliberative part that gives me great concern. I regret the loss of comity—the ability to work together or just to get along. Sadly, gridlock appears to be the new normal. However, it doesn't have to be this way.

I am very proud, I have had the privilege of being chairman of a committee that does get along, and we do get things done—the Senate Agriculture Committee. And it is really not that hard. First, we represent the best of our Nation—farmers, ranchers, growers, and the entire food value chain. We know that we have a collective job to do on their behalf—and we do just that. Second, we convene in a small hearing room—in pre-COVID times—right across the table from each other. Third, for the most part, we actually know one another.

I used to be the ranking Republican when Senator STABENOW was the chairperson. We worked together on the 2014 farm bill. In 2018, this wasn't our first rodeo. We knew, regardless of what each of us wanted, passing a farm bill was paramount. We had an agreement—no surprises, no press the other one did not know about. And we held hearings together, all over the country. I went to the campus of Michigan State and wore green and white; DEBORAH came to Kansas State and wore purple. We not only agreed to work together, we gave staff marching orders to do the same. We also became friends. I protected her and she protected me in conference. And we got 87 votes, setting a record for a farm bill—standing right there now where our leader is now sitting. I was trying for 90. He said: What do you want? I said: I want justice. He said: No, you want blood.

Now, ordinarily, we do not vote alike—Senator STABENOW and myself—but we remain friends. And that is the way it should be. Friendship and comity is the norm for the Ag Committee. It could be for the whole Senate. Though, things in this great country are rocky, I have a news flash: These really are not the worst of times.

When I first came to Washington in early 1967, our Nation experienced the tragedy of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. Within hours, Washington was on fire, marines on the Capitol steps with sandbags, automatic weapons with live ammunition. Advised to leave the beltway, I mistakenly thought I could get to my parents' apartment house. This was BF, before Franki. I wanted to take the Rock Creek Parkway. No traffic was moving, tear gas in the air, random gunshots. I decided to jump the curb and drive on

the sidewalks and eventually on the Mall itself. I was in a little Volkswagen. The police told me the parkway was closed. When they focused on the next drivers, I jumped the curb, and I took off on the parkway.

As bad as that period of time was, it was not as bad as the military march on thousands of World War I veterans demonstrating on the Mall and setting up camp in the mid-1930s and demanding bonuses. President Hoover ordered them removed by the military—led by none other than Douglas MacArthur, complete with a tank, horse cavalry—with swords—and armed troops. The “bonus” vets were quickly dispersed and rounded up.

Fast forward, the 1968 Chicago riots, Kent State and the horrible shooting of students by untrained guardsmen.

Senator Bobby Kennedy, running for President, only suffered the same fate as his brother.

And then came Watergate. Those days were tough. It was almost impossible not to face the bitter splits over our political parties and even families.

Today, we are in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, and even that has fallen into politics. But it doesn't have to be. At home, Kansas has been dealt its fair share of hardships, but in Kansas—as JERRY MORAN knows—we don't let disasters define us. We grab our bootstraps and get to work. That is our normal. JERRY will remember multiple prairie fires that have ravaged Kansas farms and ranches: the Anderson Creek fire in 2016, the Starbuck fire in 2017. Folks, these flames were 60 feet high and moving 60 miles an hour. Those folks have learned to adapt and build back with the help of USDA disaster programs.

Then we had the tale of Treece, KS—once a boom town, turned toxic waste dump. It was an extremely unsafe and unhealthy place for folks to live. We worked with the Obama administration and its EPA. I mean, really. No less, we relocated them to safer places, literally, and greener pastures because working across party lines is what we do in Kansas.

Let's not forget about the EF tornado in 2007 that completely destroyed, wiped out the community of Greensburg, KS. I immediately called President Bush. He was up at Camp David. I called from a McDonald's in the next town and asked for help. When I hung up, there were 25 people gathered around me listening.

One old-timer, in his bib overalls, said to me: PAT, was that the President of the United States?

I said: You bet.

He turned to his wife and said: Mother, I told you. I told you PAT was a talking to the President, and we would get help.

And FEMA was there the next day.

In a FEMA-issued tent, I talked to the graduating senior class, whose school and homes were but a pile of debris, and told them: You are the class of hope and destiny. The following

year, President George W. Bush spoke at graduation in Greensburg. The size of that audience matched the size of hope that Kansans had for their future and the rebuilding of their lives.

I am reminded of the optimism of those speeches and the optimism that I have for our country. We endured these hardships. We came out on the other side. We did it by changing the old normal and creating a new normal.

Here in the Senate, only we can decide what our new normal is, and we ought to get to know one another. We don't know one another. We don't have to let the apparent gravitational pull of more and more politics and pursuit of power to change what our Founders gave us—the creation of a nation, of liberty and freedom, the envy of the world, and to literally move the U.S. Senate from the moorings of its historic and great past to simply be a rubberstamp for radical change.

The beauty is that we can decide what our normal is. We don't have to let circumstances dictate our future. Let us, once again, become a body of respect, humility, cooperation, achievement, and, yes, friendship. That can and should be our new normal. The entire country could use a little bit of what we say in Kansas: *ad astra per aspera*; to the stars through difficulty.

So as my time in the Senate draws to a close, I have done my best to improve the lives of Kansans and all Americans, for decades, to accomplish big and small things so that this generation and future generations might live and achieve the American dream.

To Kansas, I say a humble thank you. Thank you for the privilege of representing you in this great body.

To my colleagues, thank you for fighting on behalf of our great Nation and alongside me to preserve this Chamber. It has been such a privilege. As I ride off into the sunset to create a new normal for Franki and me, I will be cheering for the Senate to rebuild the bridges of comity that will create a new normal.

My colleagues, my time is up. Thank you for yours.

I yield the floor.

(Applause.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO PAT ROBERTS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, thank you.

Senator ROBERTS, thank you for your comments.

I am nervous today, and more nervous now that I have heard you speak, because I am concerned that this may be for the first time in our lives that I have ever spoken longer than you. That makes me nervous.

“I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same.”

These are words spoken by PAT ROBERTS more than once, but on September 15, 1958, age 22, PAT ROBERTS

joined the Marine Corps, and he has lived by his oath, by his promise to do exactly that every day thereafter and in every job he pursued here in the Congress of the United States, in the House and the Senate.

He indicated he served as the chief of staff for Senator Frank Carlson, one of those Kansans who served the U.S. Senate and is so highly regarded even today. He served as the chief of staff for Congressman Keith Sebelius.

I met PAT ROBERTS 50 years ago, in 1969. A few years later, in 1974, I became an intern in the office of Congressman Sebelius. PAT has been my boss for 45 years.

When I describe PAT, I tell people our most common conversation is never spoken. It is symbols. PAT does this: Come here; sit down. Every time I tell PAT this, he, in his Jack Benny voice, will say: "Now cut that out." But for 45 years: Come here; sit down.

And PAT, while you discount that and I highlight it, it has been some of the most enjoyable time in my life, where I have had the opportunity to be your friend and to listen to what you had to say. I suppose if I thought long and hard, I might find something that wasn't good advice, but I can't remember it. So everything in those circumstances was something that I continue to value today. I learned something in every conversation.

Knowing PAT for 50 years, I told him that he just keeps me around and he puts up with me because I have at least heard of the people he knows.

He does know people. PAT and I both grew up in times of politics in which your relationship with voters, your relationship with constituents, your relationship with Kansans was paramount. PAT knew the school superintendent in every community. PAT knew the executive of the chamber of commerce and the newspaper editor. He knew the president of the county Farm Bureau.

I don't know how many times I heard PAT say: I am going home to talk to the coffee klatch in Dodge City or I am going to sit on the wagon tongue and I am going to hear from Kansans what they have to tell us.

Politics, as you heard from Senator ROBERTS, is in his blood and in his family—Wes Roberts, the chairman of the Republican National Committee; Frankie Roberts, the staff person for Strom Thurmond. It is in his blood and in his family. It is not just politics, but public service.

In 1980, PAT ROBERTS decided to be an office holder, not an office staffer. The first letter I ever wrote to an editor of a Kansas paper was to my hometown, where his primary opponent lived. I supported PAT ROBERTS in a letter to the editor when his opponent was somebody who was highly regarded and a friend of mine. But PAT ROBERTS' friendship and his commitment—who he is as a human being and his sworn oath—told me that PAT ROBERTS was the person I wanted to be my Congressman. The constituent in me said: This

is the guy I want serving me and my fellow Kansans.

He won that election in January of 1981 and became a House Member representing the First Congressional District of Kansas, known in our State as "The Big First." The geography of that district today—and almost true when PAT was the Congressman—is the size of the State of Illinois. The largest city is Salina, which then had a population of about 35,000. It is a rural place, and it fit the PAT ROBERTS' mode of representation, which was, I know them and they know me.

He was elected with a significant majority of voters. He won seven times to be reelected to the House of Representatives. He never received less than 60 percent of the vote, and in his last election to the House of Representatives, he received nearly 78 percent of Kansans' approval. Sitting on those wagon tongues and listening in on those coffee klatches had its consequence.

It is the kind of politics that PAT described that I hope we return to, in which it is all about taking care of Kansans, taking care of Americans, setting aside our differences and finding common ground, just as Kansans—particularly, rural Kansans—have to do in their community.

On January 3, 1997, PAT was sworn in as a Member of this body. I asked Robin, my wife, what it is I might say today. She said she remembers in about early 1996—maybe late 1995—she answered the phone, and it was PAT ROBERTS. What he said was, Tell JERRY to put his running shoes on.

PAT ROBERTS gave me the advantage of knowing his plans well in advance of the public or potential opponents, and set the stage in my life as somebody whom you would look at and think there is no chance of ever being a U.S. Senator, but PAT ROBERTS found value in me and gave me the opportunity to serve where I serve today. I never thought I would catch up with Pat in the House of Representatives. I never thought I would catch up with PAT ROBERTS in the U.S. Senate, but because he and his friends took an interest in me and because this is America, that became possible.

PAT is only the 34th Kansan to serve a term in the U.S. Senate. I like that number. PAT will recognize that 34 is special to Kansans. We are the 34th State admitted to the Union, and he is the 34th Senator to serve a term from Kansas in this body.

PAT ROBERTS told me to put my running shoes on, gave me a chance, and we have had those running shoes on for a long time thereafter.

PAT is that fourth generation Kansan who knows us. I would say one of his greatest contributions to our State, to the Midwest, and to the country has been his distinguished career in leadership in agriculture. The farm bills that he mentioned, the work with Democrats and Republicans coming together, fighting for competitive and fair markets for our producers, the sup-

port for crop insurance—there is no question that Kansas and American farmers, ranchers, and producers had a strong voice in Congress as a result of PAT ROBERTS being here.

He is distinguished by being the first Member of Congress to chair both the House and Senate Agriculture Committees. In the next Congress, we will begin the process of writing another farm bill, and it will be the first farm bill since the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 that will be written without PAT ROBERTS' direct influence.

However, Senator ROBERTS' legacy and impact on farm policy will be felt for generations to come as a result of his work in the 1996 Freedom to Farm Act, the 2000 Agriculture Risk Protection Act that modernized crop insurance, and many, many other pieces of consequential legislation.

In his early years in the Senate, as Senator ROBERTS indicated, he led the Intelligence Committee. This was during the 9/11 attacks. Under his leadership, the committee conducted a sweeping and exhausting review of U.S. intelligence, which led to critical reforms to put us in a better position to know more and protect Americans better. That work in intelligence reform earned him a spot in a very distinguished guest speaker program, the prestigious Landon Lecture Series of Kansas State University.

Combining his experience in agriculture, intelligence, and in defense, Senator ROBERTS has laid the groundwork for the National Bio and Agro-defense Facility at his alma mater in Manhattan, KS. It brings great opportunity to our State, and we are so pleased to have PAT's accomplishments benefit the country and our State for generations to come.

PAT ROBERTS deserves great credit for the Eisenhower Memorial. I have been around this issue for a long time. It has been challenging from the get-go. Nothing was easy, and controversy apparently follows every new memorial on the National Mall. I have no doubt that in the absence of PAT's leadership, his bringing people together and perhaps, yes, his sense of humor, Kansans' President Eisenhower would never be seen honored and respected at the memorial we now have.

He, Senator ROBERTS, advocates for policies he believes in. He compromises when necessary, and he always has a way of bringing everyone together, often with a joke ready to ease the tensions when things get stressful.

I always used to tell him: I saw that, once again, you became the funniest Member of Congress. You got an award.

He always would correct me: No, I am not the funniest Member; I am the most humorous Member.

Many times he has been designated the most humorous Member of Congress.

Some of the most important work he has done for Kansans won't be memorialized in laws passed or signed into law here in Washington, DC, but in the

meaningful change he made back home among the people whom he and I care for and love. How about the rural hospitals he fought for to keep their doors open or the family farms that are still operating because of decisions and efforts he made? He has consistently, continuously fought to get farmers and ranchers, to get rural communities, to get the people of Kansas the right resources at the right time.

I have had the challenge of following in politics in my life, in both the House and the Senate, those humorous people—PAT ROBERTS being one. The greatest challenge, probably for both of us, is Bob Dole. How can you ever follow Bob Dole in any way and how can you compete with his sense of humor and, particularly, his wit? So I asked Senator Dole what it is I might say on this floor to honor PAT ROBERTS. As usual, he took my responsibilities away from me and said: Here, just read this.

So these are the words of Bob Dole:

One of my first memories of Pat was when he worked for the late great Sen. Pat Carlson. Of course that was well over 50 years ago, when Pat was just a young child and I was . . . well . . . maybe just a teenager. Pat has the best sense of humor of anyone in Congress—I'm not sure how he acquired it, but I know it serves him well today. Pat—I honestly don't know what it is like to be retired, but people tell me it's great. Be forewarned, though, the rest of the world doesn't operate exactly like the Senate . . .

If anything goes wrong or breaks at home, your trusted Chief of Staff isn't on speed dial to put out the fires. Plus, there's nobody to dial your calls for you anyway.

Put your alarm clock up for sale on eBay—(1) somebody out there might want to buy a beat-up clock once owned by a famous Senator and (2) you won't need to wake up early ever again in your life . . . unless you just want to go sit in the D.C. traffic for old time's sake.

You'll have to brew your own coffee . . . so buy one of those space-age looking contraptions or make friends with your local barista.

You'll have to share elevators with the rest of the world now, so just stop looking for that "Senators Only" sign.

Your grandkids are now your information technology department, so reward them accordingly if you want your computer to be up and running. Or just ask Alexa.

But in all seriousness, Pat, you've earned some time off for a job well done in Congress over these past 40 years. Kansas has certainly benefited from your steadfast leadership. You care about the Sunflower State, and you care about our nation—and that's always been what matters most. Your strength of character, plain-spoken optimism, and determination to make a positive difference in people's lives—that's what people will remember about your legacy of public service here. You're a great American and a dear friend, and Elizabeth and I wish you nothing but the best for you and Franki from here on out. One important point of clarification, though—the filibuster simply doesn't work at home.

God Bless America,
BOB DOLE.

I know that all of us and Kansans have great regard for Senator Dole. I also know that Kansans and all of us have great regard for PAT ROBERTS. My

guess, in knowing PAT, is that his role model—the person he may admire the most—is that Kansan Dwight Eisenhower. In the book "How Ike Led," which PAT gave us all a copy of, I read that Ike led with a sense of humor as part of the art of leadership of getting along with people and getting things done. He also said the supreme quality for leadership was, unquestionably, integrity. Without it, no real success was possible no matter whether it was on a section gang, a football field, in the Army, or in an office.

PAT ROBERTS, I have no doubt that you have lived up to that role model—that Kansan who is esteemed around the world—and you have led like Ike led. I thank you and your staff for all that you have done for Kansas and for America. I thank you for what you have done for me and our team. Your mom and your dad—your dad, you say, got you started in this politics world. I knew your mom; I never met your dad. They would be so proud of you for the service that you are completing this term.

To Franki, David, Ashleigh, and Anne-Wesley, thank you for your support and engagement. It is not PAT ROBERTS—it is the family—and you have all been engaged in his politics and his public service day in and day out.

Robba and I wish you and Franki absolutely the best.

I told a Kansas farmer what I was doing but didn't ask him for any advice as to what to say. His last comment—he is a rancher from Elkhart—was, "As a Kansan, I would want to know that my Senator fought for my values in DC and that the Senator did everything he could to ensure our part of the world was a priority to the Nation."

To the rancher in Elkhart, PAT ROBERTS is exactly that—a Kansan who fought for our values at home while in Washington and did everything he could do to ensure that our part of the world was not forgotten in this part of the world.

So, PAT, I guess you said thank you to Kansans, and you said thank you to this Senate. I think it is time for me to say in return, on behalf of all Kansans, thank you for your service to our Nation and to our State. For a life being well lived, you are the example. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to someone who has been more than a colleague, who has been more than just a friend. In fact, he has been a true partner in this Senate, and that has paid huge dividends for farmers and families and communities across our country.

Senator PAT ROBERTS has been here in the Senate for a long time. Some might even call him an institution. In fact, at a recent Ag Committee event, I joked that, as a young man, he advised George Washington on farm policy. That might be a bit of an exag-

geration, but his legacy can hardly be overstated. He has left a lasting imprint on farm and food policy in this country. As has been said, he is the only person to have written a farm bill as both the chairs of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees.

Those of us who have had the honor of working alongside PAT on the Senate Agriculture Committee know there is no other place like it. It is a place where we leave politics at the door and focus on ways we can improve people's lives and livelihoods in rural America. We do that because we know agriculture isn't a red issue or a blue issue. Agriculture and food policy affect all of us—everyone—and nobody knows that better than Senator ROBERTS.

Senator ROBERTS and I have never given up on farm bills, and we never gave up on passing the 2018 farm bill even when it got tough. At the beginning of the negotiations, we made a commitment to work together. We visited each other's home States. In fact, twice we visited. I arrived in the Little Apple of Manhattan, KS, wearing K-State purple, which, again on his behalf, I am wearing today. Then, a few weeks later, PAT came to Frankenmuth, MI, and wore an MSU green tie.

Around this time, we also made a commitment to each other to write a bipartisan farm bill. Throughout the entire process, I never doubted that PAT had my back, even when negotiations got tough, and he knew I had his back as well. Thanks to this partnership, we achieved the most bipartisan bill in history. As he said, the first time around, it was 86 votes, and then the final bill was 87 votes. That was the most "yes" votes on a farm bill ever. We were able to do that because we had a unique partnership built on trust and mutual respect, and the outcome was a strong, bipartisan bill that provided certainty for farmers—from wheat farmers in Kansas to cherry growers in Michigan. Part of that certainty was with special crop insurance, and nobody deserves more credit for the foundation of that important safety net than Senator PAT ROBERTS.

PAT is also a champion for food security and agriculture exports and agriculture research, which is why he and I worked together to establish the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research in the 2014 farm bill. He also understands the importance of protecting food assistance for children and for families. I was honored to share the Food Research and Action Center Distinguished Service Award with Senator ROBERTS last year for our teamwork.

Above all, it has been an honor working with PAT because he is truly one of a kind. From the moment I met him, it became abundantly clear that he was not the run-of-the-mill politician. Some say it is his unflappable nature. Others say it is his unique sense of humor. Yet, to me, PAT ROBERTS is defined by his loyalty, his integrity, and his dedication to the people of Kansas.

He started his career as a first lieutenant in the Marine Corps. It is clear he has carried that courage and conviction with him throughout his entire life. As he said, he was also a newspaper reporter, which makes sense when you think about his dogged determination and, for better or worse, his ability to be exceptionally quotable. As a public servant, he is so beloved in his home State of Kansas that he has never lost an election—a record 24 and 0. If only his K-State Wildcats could be so lucky.

(Laughter.)

Senator PAT ROBERTS, it has been an honor to be your partner and an even bigger honor to be your friend. So, while your retirement is well-deserved, you will be deeply missed on the Agriculture Committee and in the Senate. Thank you for all you have done for farmers and families and for the American people. I wish you only continued happiness and success as you and Franki and the family move to this next piece of your life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, my seatmate here, PAT ROBERTS, is going to be missed not just by the whole Senate, not by the Nation, not by the people of Kansas, but by a lot of us he keeps going day-to-day and has for a long time.

I first met PAT ROBERTS in 1979. I had just been elected in 1978 to the U.S. House of Representatives. As has been said here today, he was the chief of staff of distinguished Congressman Keith Sebelius, who was well recognized and well respected on both sides of the aisle. PAT was his chief of staff. Our paths crossed later when he was elected to the Senate. We served on the Intelligence Committee together and on other committees.

He is unique. That wit of his, I think—the humor—is genetic. He has a daughter who is like that, which is wonderful, I think. I told PAT one time: That must be an inherited characteristic. He smiled. He understood. Yet PAT ROBERTS is a lot more than just a little humor to me; he is a serious person. He has had, as you know, a distinguished career as a Kansas State graduate, a Marine officer, a staffer, a Congressman, and one who has chaired both Ag Committees in the House and Senate, which has never been done—40 years of elected office between the House and the Senate.

We are going to miss you, PAT. I am going to miss you. I have sat here with you, and I have sat all over the Senate with you.

I will tell you, if you are feeling down about something or if you are feeling bleak that day, PAT will either straighten you out or make you think that this is not all bad, that America is coming together, and that it is always coming together.

So, PAT, you have your great family up here with you today. Franki has

been unique for you. She has been a great influence on you. We are going to miss you. I am going to miss that humor every day. Godspeed.

Mr. President, today, I would like to speak about my longtime colleague and friend, Senator PAT ROBERTS.

PAT and I have served together in Congress for 40 years. It comes as no surprise that he is the longest-serving member of the Kansas delegation.

Born in Topeka, PAT graduated from Kansas State University (K-State) and served as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, achieving the rank of First Lieutenant.

He went on to work for Senator Frank Carlson and later Congressman Keith Sebelius, whom he succeeded in the House of Representatives in 1980.

PAT and I were colleagues in the House. It was there that we first became friends.

In 1996, PAT was elected to represent Kansas in the U.S. Senate and is currently finishing his fourth term.

PAT ROBERTS has had quite the career in public service. Over his four decades in Congress, he has served as chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, the Senate Ethics Committee, the Senate Intelligence Committee, and the Senate Agriculture Committee.

PAT ROBERTS is the first Member of Congress in history to have chaired both the House Agriculture Committee and the Senate Agriculture Committee.

He has also served as the ranking member on each of those committees.

In 2018, Senator ROBERTS became the first Member of Congress to write and pass farm bill in both Chambers.

Over the years, his dedication to the people of Kansas has been extraordinary and inspiring.

He arrived on Capitol Hill as a staffer in 1967—and is leaving Washington as the longest serving Member of Congress in his State's history.

It is also worth noting that he never lost a race. Not once.

PAT ROBERTS will undoubtedly be missed in the Senate by his peers on both sides of the aisle.

Senator ROBERTS is currently my deskmate on the Senate floor. I know I will miss his congeniality and humor during our conversations.

Annette and I have enjoyed spending time with PAT and Franki over the years. We wish them all the best.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I first met PAT ROBERTS when I was running for the U.S. House of Representatives for the very first time. I had a friend who worked for PAT, and he got me a meeting with him, which, at the time, was a pretty big deal because he was the chairman of the House Ag Committee, and I was in a Republican primary, where I was over 50 points behind. So the prospects weren't really bright that I was ever going to be somebody who would make it through

and end up serving there, but nobody could have been more encouraging or kind. I had a great meeting with him. We talked about agriculture. I am grateful that I have had the opportunity to get to know him pretty well here during my time in the Senate.

One of the reasons we have so much common ground is we both come from States where agriculture is incredibly important. It is the No. 1 industry in South Dakota. I have had the privilege of serving on the Ag Committee with PAT now for more than a decade. I call him "my chairman" since he has been my chairman on the Ag Committee for so long. He calls me "Coop"—a moniker he gave me very early in our acquaintance because he says I look like Gary Cooper. Now, I have to admit that the first time he called me that I had to look up some pictures to see if that were a compliment or not, but I know that he meant it that way. Whenever he introduced me at the Ag Committee, it was always, "Coop, it's high noon. You're up." "High Noon" was a famous movie in which Gary Cooper starred with Grace Kelly.

Of course, PAT is, I would say, somebody who is very accomplished in talking about movies from that era and stars from that era. He knows a little bit about everything and a lot about a few things. I call him "my chairman," as I said, because he has been there for an awfully long time, and he never minds the stories and nicknames. They are quintessentially PAT. It is just the way that he conducts himself.

Somebody talked about his sense of humor here this morning. I think Senator MORAN talked about PAT's being a funny guy in the Senate and of PAT's saying he was not a funny guy but a humorous guy. I would say he is a funny person. He is a comedian by nature, and he keeps all of us entertained with his repertoire of country music lyrics, his old movie quotes, and just a storytelling flair. You can be sure that, if you are going to be around PAT for very long, you are going to have a few belly laughs.

I always tell him—and I think it is true, and I think you have kind of heard it today—when he gets up on the floor and speaks or when he speaks at a committee hearing, that when you close your eyes, you kind of hear Paul Harvey. Senator MORAN said he sounded like Jack Benny once in a while, and maybe that is true, too. What I always knew when I was growing up was that Paul Harvey was a voice that was on the radio pretty much every day in our house, and I hear that same sort of Midwestern, resonant, and commonsensical voice whenever I hear PAT get up and talk.

But I will tell you that PAT may have a great sense of humor—he does keep us constantly smiling around here, which is something we don't do near often enough, particularly these days—but he is also very, very serious when it comes to getting things done for the people of Kansas, and they couldn't have a better advocate.

As I said, both PAT and I come from States whose lifeblood is agriculture, and PAT ROBERTS' heart has always beat with the farmers of this country. His advocacy for American agriculture resulted in his serving as chairman of both the House and the Senate Agriculture Committees during his career, and, as already been noted, he is the first Member of Congress in history—first in history—to have served as the chairman of both the House Agriculture and the Senate Agriculture Committee.

He is also the first Member of Congress to have written and passed a farm bill in both Chambers. I think he has worked, as was said earlier, on eight farm bills in all, which is an incredible number. And I am proud to have worked with him on three farm bills in the Senate, including the 2018 farm bill, which passed the Senate with the greatest number of votes of any farm bill in Senate history—a tribute to the hard work that PAT and his staff put into building consensus and reaching out to Members from all across this country who represent different areas, different commodities, different crops, and bringing them together to write a farm bill.

I have been around here long enough and been associated with enough farm bills to know that they tend to be kind of controversial because some people represent cities and maybe don't have agricultural constituencies. So the fact that PAT was successful in getting a farm bill across the finish line here in the Senate with a record 87 votes is a remarkable accomplishment in and of itself.

Of course, PAT's leadership, as has already been pointed out, hasn't been limited to agriculture. Among other things, he has served as chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, where he led a sweeping review of the U.S. intelligence apparatus and advanced a number of reforms to shore up our intelligence and our national security. Then there is his work on biosciences, military issues, education, healthcare, and the list goes on and on and on.

PAT has proudly represented the people of Kansas in Congress for 40 years—16 in the House of Representatives and now 24 in the U.S. Senate—but, as has already been mentioned as well, his public service began long before that with his time as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. Once a marine, always a marine. PAT has proudly represented the marines here in Congress. He is currently the most senior marine serving here on Capitol Hill.

The motto of the Marine Corps is "Semper Fidelis"—always faithful. PAT has lived out that motto over his long career of service to our country, and I hate to think of a Senate without PAT ROBERTS. He will be sorely missed, but he has more than earned his retirement and a chance to spend more time with his wife Franki and his children and grandchildren. I know how much

they have contributed to his success here. There aren't any of us who are here who don't have a supportive family, supportive spouse. We are truly grateful for the many contributions that Franki and the family have made to PAT's accomplishments here, his success in the Senate, and I know he is looking forward to spending more time with them in the future.

PAT, thank you for your leadership, for your friendship. May God bless you in your retirement. I will miss you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I rise also to say farewell to a truly great Senator, Senator PAT ROBERTS.

He has been a friend and a mentor of mine in the U.S. Senate. He has been a leader, and there is no doubt—we are hearing it all—about all his accomplishments. He is certainly one of the great State of Kansas's most accomplished Senators ever.

But I would be remiss if I didn't mention that he is also a great Senator for another group of proud Americans, and that would be the U.S. Marine Corps. Senator ROBERTS has taken care of the U.S. Marines during his entire tenure here. If the marines needed something, they knew where to go—the great Senator from Kansas.

As you know, most Senators wear their Senate pin here, indicating that they are a Senator. We are proud to wear that. For the years I have known Senator ROBERTS—he is probably doing it again today—he wears his pin, but sometimes and usually he actually wears the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor, showing—and I think he has one on right now—where so much of his loyalty lies—with the U.S. Marine Corps. So I know that the marines are certainly going to miss Senator ROBERTS. I am certainly going to miss Senator ROBERTS.

You know, just like in his remarks today, he is a man of great wit, great stories, and I have had the honor to hear so many of these stories, and a lot of these stories, of course, for me, involve Alaska and the late great Senator Ted Stevens, who was also a very close friend of PAT's, in the seat which I am honored to hold here in the U.S. Senate. I have learned so much from these stories that I heard from Senator ROBERTS.

Most importantly, he has been a great example for me and so many other Senators. He is a statesman, a marine, an optimist. You heard it in his remarks today. We need more of that. He is a family man, a dedicated husband for over 50 years to a beautiful, wonderful wife; a leader in the Senate—six chairmanships—who gets things done for his State and for his country; and finally, a man of integrity—of integrity.

You know, it is tough duty to be the chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee, but the Senate Ethics Committee is much needed here, and to

chair that committee for 24 years is a testament of every single Senator here saying how much they believe in this man's integrity.

I was honored a couple of years ago when PAT asked me to serve on the Eisenhower Memorial Commission. It was a true honor for me, and I will say I saw again one of the great qualities of Senator ROBERTS' tenacity. On a rainy night a few months ago, I attended the dedication ceremony of President Eisenhower and watched as America celebrated a great American, a great Kansan, and there is one person who really made that a reality—Senator PAT ROBERTS.

So today we say farewell to another great Kansan and a great American, my good friend Senator PAT ROBERTS.

Thank you, sir, for the example, for the mentorship, for the friendship, and your great service to the Senate, to Kansas, to America, and to the U.S. Marine Corps. Semper Fi.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 6395

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I sound a little redundant here because we have been talking about this bill for a long time now, for several months. People don't realize how long it takes to get a defense authorization bill all the way through the system. There is no doubt in my mind that this is the most important bill of the year, every year, and the importance, I think, is pretty well demonstrated by the fact that we have successfully passed a defense authorization bill every year for 60 years. And I feel we will do the same thing. It could be today, it could be tomorrow, but nonetheless, it is a bill that has to pass.

Now, when President Trump came into office 4 years ago, we had a problem. He inherited a military that had serious problems. In fact, during the last 4 years of the previous administration—that would have been 2010 to 2015—the President depleted the budget or reduced the budget for military by 25 percent.

I don't say that really critically of President Obama because he had different priorities. He was up-front about it and didn't consider this to be high enough of a priority. Now, the sad thing about this is that at the same time that he was reducing our military spending by 25 percent, Russia was increasing theirs threefold and China's was increased by 83 percent. So we dropped ours by 25 percent, and at the same time, China increased theirs 83 percent. That is really serious.

People have this assumption that America has the best of everything and that we don't have any problem out there, but we do, and we found several systems where they were actually getting ahead of us. So, working with Congress, we passed the NDAA appropriations bill. We secured nearly \$3 trillion in funding for our Nation's defense. This year alone, the administration will provide more than \$740 billion for resources our military needs to keep our country and our troops safe.

The fiscal year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act cements President Trump's hard work to restore our military to be the best fighting force. That is what we are supposed to be doing in America. The NDAA authorizes critical investments to protect our military advantage across all domains, from the skies to the seas and even now through space, a whole new program.

With the President's leadership last year, the NDAA created the Space Force. It is the first time there has been a new branch since 1947, and that happened this year. This year's NDAA makes sure that it is set up successfully.

One of the things about the Space Force that I think people who are somewhat critical of—we were doing a good job in space before without the Space Force, but the fact that we can concentrate all those efforts in one force and be on equal footing—because that is exactly what our primary problem is out there with China and Russia. They both have what would be in their interpretation a space force, so it was important that we did, too, and that was the right thing to do.

This also authorizes the procurement of 93 F-35s, the Joint Strike Fighters, to continue the rebuilding of our over-worked combat aircraft. It also includes authorizations for C-130J aircraft, which will modernize our fleet, used for transportation of personnel and also for refuelers and things that we have to do in the military. That is an upgrade of the old version. The J model of the C-130 is a great vehicle. We have to have it authorized and all of the priorities set. That is what this bill does.

We also have authorized the procurement of nine new battle force ships, including the Virginia-class submarines. We talked about that for a long time, and now we are finally doing that.

Another area that we have been doing is our nuclear forces. Our President has been a champion for our nuclear modernization efforts—and for good reason. Our nuclear deterrent is the cornerstone of our national security. The NDAA ensures that our Nation wields a safe and reliable nuclear deterrent by authorizing the resources needed to modernize.

Now, we didn't do this for a long period of time. We fell behind. This bill is reversing that, and we are getting back into the competition—the nuclear competition. That is where the real threat is. Everybody knows that.

I think having the best weapons and equipment is critical, to be sure, but we also need the infrastructure and manpower to support it. Over the past several years, Congress has provided the military with significant funding increases and authorizations to begin and continue critical military construction projects overseas, as well as in our country.

These military construction projects can be found everywhere—from Arkansas to South Carolina, Oklahoma to California, and Missouri to Massachusetts, and all across the country. These investments will also build on our improvements to family housing.

I have heard people complain about what we do for the military in this country, and they try to say that we are spending more on our military than both China and Russia put together. Yeah, that is true, but there is a reason for that, and the reason for that is that the most expensive thing in building a military is individuals—what we are spending on individuals, on housing, and on all these things.

Now, when you are dealing with it, and looking at Communist countries, and you look at Russia and you look at China, they don't take care of their people. They don't have that expense, and that is why we spend more than they do. You know, just in the last 2 years, what we have done to improve housing for our troops—troops and their families—other people don't do that, but we do it. So that is why it is so significant that we do this.

I have a concern that I would like to share, and I hesitate to do this because it will take a little bit of time. People out there don't realize, in a bill like this, what all goes into it. I looked at the people who are heading this thing up, and, yesterday, Senator REED talked about the Democrats and the Republicans and their staff people, who worked so hard. Let me say this: We could not have done this without the cooperation and the love that we have for each other, with Senator REED. I mean, he heads up the minority, and I head up the majority, and we want, together, to make sure we have the best product in the world and that we get the best of everything for our troops in the field.

So I want to really single out Senator REED for all the work that he has done. He has been a great partner and friend throughout this process. And we want to thank our colleagues in the House also—Congressman SMITH and Congressman THORNBERRY. We all worked together.

You know, I have been involved in a lot of these things, and they always end up in the Big 4. That is where you have the leading Democrat and Republican in the House and Democrat and Republican in the Senate, insofar as defense is concerned, and we iron these things out. But in the meantime, this long bill is one that has taken just a lot of work. And I know that, yesterday, Senator REED got a chance to

mention the names of and show his appreciation for the Democrats that worked in the minority, and I want us to do the same thing for the Republicans in the majority.

John Bonsell—I don't think there is a person in Washington, DC, who knows more about the military than John Bonsell does. And he put together a group of people. These are all experts. They all work—you know, people don't understand this, but I am talking about weekends, Sundays, times that they have to work to get these things done and to get that bill into position, because you have to pass it through the Senate, and you have to go onto the Senate floor. Then you have to go to the House and the House committee and the House floor, and then you have to have a conference.

There are some things in this bill that we avoided having—and I am thankful that we did, quite frankly—that the House wanted and the Senate didn't want. We were able to iron out these differences and get them done. But to do that, we had to work long hours. I can assure you that the staff worked a lot longer hours than I did.

So I single these people out as really experts, and I want to show them appreciation, and I am just going to read them off to you here: John Bonsell. We know about John Bonsell. We know what he has done. He has been with me since he was, years ago, stationed at Fort Sill in my State of Oklahoma. He has been with me, and he has been heading up this group and putting the group together.

This group consists of: John Wason, Tom Goffus, Stephanie Barna, Greg Lilly, Marta Hernandez, Rick Berger, Jennie Wright, Adam Barker, Adam Trull, Al Edwards, Sean O'Keefe, Brad Patout, Jason Potter, Katie Sutton, Eric Trager, TC Williams, Otis Winkler, Gwyneth Woolwine, Katie Magnus, Leah Brewer, Debbie Chiarello, Gary Howard, Tyler Wilkinson, John Bryant, Griffin Cannon, Keri-Lyn Michalke, Soleil Sykes, Brittany Amador, and Jillian Schofield.

Now, these people, they are just names to a lot of other people, but each one has just really performed long and hard hours. There has been more staff work go into this bill than any other bill that is before us, than anytime year round.

So I just appreciate so much the hard work that has gone there, and we will pass this bill. It is one that if we don't pass it, we are not going to give the resources necessary for our kids in the field to have the safety that we can provide them and to have the equipment.

We want to get to the point where we have the very best of everything out there, and right now, we don't. China and Russia are knocking at our door. We have to do a better job than we have done in the past, and I am going to be working with the administration to do everything we can for the coming

year. But right now, we need to get caught up and go ahead and pass this.

This bill is the roadmap for the next year, and that is why this is important. So I encourage all of us to do what we have to do to get this bill done—hopefully, today, but definitely by tomorrow. I believe that will happen because people do care about our troops. There is no one more deserving in America than our troops who are out there in harm's way, and we are going to make sure that we do the right thing for them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to floor today in complete support of Senator INHOFE, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and I come in support of the National Defense Authorization Act. I come to speak to that, and I am so grateful for the Senator from Oklahoma and for his ongoing, determined leadership in making sure that our Nation remains safe and secure and free. And it is because of the work done by Senator INHOFE and his committee and this body and this legislation that we will be voting on. I am so grateful for the leadership of the chairman, and I want to talk, specifically, about the reason I think it is important that we do pass the legislation that the committee has worked so hard on.

So the Presiding Officer knows, as a member of that committee, that this critical national security legislation lays out America's defense and national security priorities, as the Senator from Oklahoma just made up, for the years to come. It sets the policies to defend our Nation, and it supports America's service men and women here at home, as well as those abroad.

I was honored to spend Thanksgiving, again this year, with Wyoming National Guard troops, members of our Air National Guard, and they are serving at this time in Qatar, in the Al Udeid Air Force Base in the Persian Gulf. And when I think of the National Defense Authorization Act, this legislation before us today, I think of them. I think about the members there—Charlie Med, doing medical evacuations and medical transport.

First, I will tell you that, in terms of these Wyoming soldiers who are there, if you are in need of medical care or medical transport, you would be in very capable hands. You also know they have what they need to be able to do the job. I think of them, and I think of their families—the sacrifices that are being made by the families at home, because the families play a significant and important role in this as well.

You know, it is interesting, with so many deployed overseas right now, some of them have found that their deployments have been extended. Because of coronavirus, they are unable to do the transports of moving people back to the United States for the holi-

days and then back into the fields, so that they have many who felt that they would be home for the holidays who are going to find that they are not able to be home for the holidays. So I think it is very important that the Senate send a strong message that we have their backs, just as they have ours.

This is an incredibly bipartisan piece of legislation—one of the most bipartisan pieces of legislation every year when it comes to the floor of the Senate. It reflects equal input from Republicans and from Democrats. The Senate Armed Services Committee adopted 229 bipartisan amendments before it approved the NDAA this summer by a vote in the committee, on which the Presiding Officer also sits, of 25 to 2.

It is also in line with the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019. It supports \$741 billion in defense funding for the 2021 fiscal year.

The NDAA is really a proud tradition of this institution and of our Nation. This is the 60th year in a row that the Senate has taken up the NDAA, and it has passed this body every year. We need to make sure this year is no exception. The world may be distracted by other things that are going on—certainly, the issue of a coronavirus pandemic—but, make no mistake, China and Russia still have global ambitions, and they pose grave threats to our Nation's security.

The Chinese military has actually stepped up its aggression against its neighbors, and we see it in the South China Sea. Russia is using energy as a weapon against its neighbors, and it continues cyber attacks against governments and institutions around the globe. This legislation will help keep China and Russia in check.

It maintains our high-tech edge, as the chairman of the Armed Services Committee has just said. It modernizes our nuclear weapons system with funding for the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent. It invests in new technologies—hypersonic weapons, biotechnologies, artificial intelligence, cyber security—all of which are designed to help keep us safe and free.

It implements the National Defense Strategy to promote a strong military deterrent and to strive for lasting peace, and it delivers a well-deserved pay raise for our troops, along with high-quality housing, healthcare, and childcare for military families at home, as well as abroad.

So I do want to thank Senator INHOFE and Ranking Member Senator REED of Rhode Island for their work in bringing this bill to the floor. Democrats have a history of opposing sometimes stronger defense funding, especially during the Obama-Biden years, but this makes longer term funding uncertain, and it becomes even more important to do what we need to do now to stand up against our adversaries.

No, we can't afford to slow our Nation's critical defense investments now. This NDAA will protect American

leadership and values all around the world, and it will give our Nation what we need to confront the aggressors that I mentioned, like China and Russia. This legislation is strategic, and this legislation is strong. It is smart, and it supports our troops, and it stands up to our enemies. The Senate needs to pass this, the 60th National Defense Authorization Act.

CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, I would now like to take a moment to discuss another topic, and that is coronavirus relief for American families.

Increasingly, we are seeing communities across the country asking for a clear path forward—a path forward to put the virus behind us and to help us grow our economy. The takeaway from last Friday's job report is we really have no time to waste. For the first time since we passed the CARES Act, the jobs report showed signs of a slowing recovery—recovery, yes, but not as rapid as planned.

The sectors hardest hit at the beginning of the pandemic are now hard hit again—retail and food services. The Republican-led CARES Act secured the swiftest, strongest economic recovery in our Nation's history. It added more than 12.3 million jobs in the last 7 months. It has been a great American comeback.

At the end of this month, provisions of the CARES Act are expiring—things like sick leave, unemployment benefits, and tax provisions. We need to extend those. For small businesses, I believe we need to reestablish and refurbish the popular Paycheck Protection Program. The money has gone. I talked to small businesses in Wyoming, talked to county commissioners last night, and talked to our Wyoming stock growers yesterday. We need to replenish the Paycheck Protection Program.

We need to reallocate unused funds for immediate needs now. Republican priorities are American priorities in terms of relief from coronavirus.

We want to make sure, certainly, to fund the distribution of the vaccine, which is ready to go. We need to provide relief for individuals and small businesses, and we need to get kids back into the classroom safely so they don't fall further behind.

The job we need to do is significant, it is serious, and relief is necessary. We need to get a bridge to the point where people have either received the vaccine or there is immunity in communities. Republicans are offering a path forward. We are doing it legislatively.

What we have heard from the Democrats are hard lines, all-or-nothing demands. We have heard them for the last 7 months. Democrats have offered no new proposals for COVID relief. They passed their \$3 trillion Fantasy Island bill in May and never lifted a pen after that.

In the last 6 months, Democrats have blocked relief that we have offered on the Senate floor four different times. Last week, Speaker PELOSI said—admitted—that she had held up all those

6 months of coronavirus relief for the American public for political gain, for politics. And we heard it from the minority assistant leader just yesterday, admitting the same, punishing the American people for politics. It is a sad commentary on where that party has been as the American people are asking for relief. Democrats don't have a plan. They played politics with the pandemic.

Again, our path forward is to do the things that we know need to be done: distribute the vaccine, provide Americans with relief, and get Americans' lives back on track. What we hear from Democrats are more lockdowns, more taxes during a pandemic, and more special projects for the far left. It is sad. The Democrats' policies don't meet the moment. We need to get relief to the public now. Democrats are ignoring where we really are in terms of the cost the Americans have borne and the progress that we have made in the recovery, and they have done it for political purposes.

Scientists and researchers are within several days of approval of the vaccine and a distribution nationwide. The country is soon going to have several highly effective vaccines distributed to every State.

In Wyoming, we are looking forward to 5,000 vaccines as early as Monday and 15,000 by the end of the month. I talked to the head of the intensive care unit at the Wyoming Medical Center just the other day—the hospital where I had been chief of staff, where there are increasing numbers of patients in the intensive care unit on respirators, where the staff is exhausted. They say: We need the vaccine for the staff, for the frontline workers, for the healthcare workers, for the elderly, and for the nursing home patients so they don't end up in the hospital and on ventilators.

These are the healthcare heroes of the day, the doctors and nurses taking care of these sick patients. We are going to administer vaccines to them, to the nursing home patients, and to those at high risk. Over the next 3 months, over 1 million people will be vaccinated.

Relief is necessary. In our State, we have lost 299 citizens to coronavirus—a number that I would have thought would not have occurred. This is with people trying to social distance, people trying to do the kinds of things in terms of wearing masks—a behavior that we know, with hygiene, would minimize the spread—but still the disease continues to spread.

The vaccine is the solution, but between now and the time the people can get vaccinated, help is needed, and it is up to this body to act. We still have work to do on behalf of the American people. I hope that the Democrats will join us in this effort this holiday season to get that relief to folks who need it. In the meantime, I say let's continue to do the things that we know work so we can stay safe and our businesses and our country can stay open.

With that, I thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, this country faces an unprecedented crisis in terms of the pandemic and the economic meltdown. I understand that negotiations are currently going on in terms of coming up with an economic package dealing with COVID-19 relief, and I applaud the very hard work that each of the negotiators are doing, Democrats and Republicans. But the truth is that the results up to this point for those negotiations are totally unsatisfactory given the economic desperation facing tens of millions of working families all across this country.

As I think everyone will remember, back in March of this year, at the beginning of the pandemic, the U.S. Congress acted unanimously—unanimously, Democrats and Republicans—and worked with President Trump to come up with an economic package that went a long way toward preventing absolute misery and destitution for many of our people.

Through no fault of their own, COVID-19 resulted in millions of our people losing their jobs and their income. That is what the pandemic did. Nobody is to blame. That is what happened. And in response, in March, Democrats and Republicans in this Congress came together, worked with the President of the United States, and in a very significant way responded to that crisis. That is what we did in March.

What I don't understand is that at a time when, in many ways, the economic and public health crisis is worse today than it was in March, why we are not responding accordingly?

In March, as you know, we passed the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act, which included a \$600 supplement to unemployed workers, and, my God, what relief that was to millions of workers who had lost their jobs. In addition, we provided a \$1,200 direct payment to every working-class adult in this country, plus \$500 for their kids.

Once again—and let me repeat this—we did this unanimously, and we did it working with President Trump despite many of the enormous disagreements that a lot of us have with President Trump on so many issues.

Now, what I don't understand is, if we could work together in March, if we could have succeeded 9 months ago, why can we not do exactly the same thing right now? That is why I will insist that any agreement in terms of a COVID-19 relief package must include not only strong unemployment benefits

but a \$1,200 direct payment for the working families of this country, similarly structured to what was included in the CARES package of March.

I will be introducing an amendment to the 1-week continuing resolution to make sure that occurs, that every working-class adult in this country receives another \$1,200 direct payment, plus \$500 for their kids. If we could do it in March and it was the right thing then, now, at a time when the situation in many ways is even worse, we can and must do it today.

Every Member of this body, I know, wants to get out of Washington to get home to their families for the holiday season, and put me at the very top of that list. But at a time when so many American families are suffering, when so many people don't know how they are going to feed their kids or prevent being evicted from their homes or how they are going to pay for a doctor's visit, we cannot leave Washington and return to our families unless we address the economic suffering that so many other families are facing.

When a national emergency occurs, the U.S. Government must respond. And we are in a national emergency today. To get out of Washington, to turn our backs on the suffering of so many men, women, and children in Vermont and in every other State in this country, would be immoral, it would be unconscionable, and we cannot allow that to happen.

Again, we must make certain that every working family in this country receives a \$1,200 direct payment, plus \$500 for their kids. That is the least we can do.

Let me be as clear as I can be. Today, as a result of the horrific pandemic and economic meltdown, the American working class is hurting in a way that has not been experienced since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

In terms of public health, yesterday alone, over 220,000 Americans were diagnosed with COVID-19—yesterday—and tragically, over 3,000 died from this horrific virus. We are experiencing now some of the worst days in terms of cases being diagnosed, in terms of hospitalization, in terms of death. That is where we are today. In other words, more Americans were killed by the coronavirus yesterday than were killed on 9/11.

Tens of millions of our fellow citizens have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. They have lost their incomes. They have lost their health insurance. They have depleted their life savings.

Let me tell you this: We deferred evictions. We prevented people from being evicted from their homes. But when at some point that deferment ends, all across the country, people are going to owe thousands and thousands of dollars to their landlords. They don't have the money to pay them. Tens of millions of people are in danger of being evicted.

You may have noticed that there were reports out there that hunger—

this is the United States of America, the wealthiest country in the history of the world. We are looking at numbers that suggest that hunger is at the highest level we have seen in decades. Children in America are going hungry, and all across this country, tenants are worried that they are going to get a knock on the door from the sheriff evicting them from their homes or their apartments and throwing their belongings out on the street to join the other 500,000 Americans who are now homeless.

In America today, over half of our workers are living paycheck-to-paycheck, while one out of every four workers in this country is either unemployed or earning an annual income of less than \$20,000 a year. I don't know how anybody makes it on less than \$20,000 a year.

During the holiday season to come, over one-third of Americans expect to lose income and are already having a difficult time paying for their basic household expenses.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that, at a time when so many people in our economy are suffering, it has been far worse for the African-American and Latino communities. During this pandemic, nearly 60 percent of Latino families and 55 percent of African-American families have either experienced a job loss or a pay cut. That is just an unimaginable number. So the general population is suffering—even worse for the African-American and Latino communities.

I should also add that, in the midst of this pandemic, not everybody is suffering. The people on top, some of the billionaires on top, are doing phenomenally well. Over the past 9 months of this pandemic, 650 billionaires—650, not a whole lot of people—have seen their wealth go up by over \$1 trillion, during this pandemic, and now own over twice as much wealth as the bottom 50 percent of American people.

This is the United States of America, the richest country in the history of the world. No person in this great country should be going hungry. No person should live in fear of going homeless. No person in America should lack the healthcare they need when they or their kids get sick, especially in the midst of the worst public health crisis in 100 years.

Can you imagine? I mean, it really is unimaginable that we are looking at 220,000 people yesterday having been diagnosed with COVID-19, with the virus, and there are 90 million people in America who are either uninsured or underinsured, and they can't even afford to go to a doctor. But that is exactly what is going on in America today.

This is an unprecedented moment in American history, and the Senate needs to take unprecedented action to protect the working families of this country who are facing extreme economic desperation. If we could act effectively in March through the CARES

Act, we can act effectively today as we enter this holiday season.

Once again, I very much appreciate the hard work that has gone into the current \$908 billion proposal being worked on by a number of Democratic and Republican Senators, but, simply stated, given the horrific extent of the current crisis and the desperation of so many of our people, this proposal does not go anywhere—anywhere—far enough.

In truth, rather than the \$3.4 trillion which we on the Democratic side called for in the Heroes Act and passed in the House—the U.S. House of Representatives a number of months ago passed a \$3.4 trillion bill, but what is being discussed and negotiated right now with Democratic and Republican Senators only allocates \$348 billion in new money. The remaining \$560 billion are funds transferred from the CARES Act that have not yet been obligated.

So what we are talking about now, as opposed to \$3.4 trillion passed in the Heroes Act, is, roughly speaking, \$348 billion in new money right now. We are talking about, roughly speaking, 10 percent of new money compared to what was passed in the House. That is absurd. That is unacceptable. I am prepared to negotiate, but I cannot negotiate in good faith when we are receiving 10 percent of new money compared to what was passed in the House in the Heroes bill.

Unlike the CARES Act, which we passed unanimously in March, the proposal now being negotiated only provides a \$300 supplement for unemployed workers rather than \$600 a week. Further, unlike the \$1,200 direct payment for every working-class individual and \$500 for each child, this agreement being negotiated provides absolutely nothing—zero. Moreover, this proposal does nothing to address the healthcare crisis impacting tens of millions of Americans who cannot afford medical care and has totally inadequate financial assistance for the most vulnerable.

The American people need help, and they need help now. In fact, there has never been a time in the modern history of this country when the American people were in more economic desperation and a time when people needed help. If a government means anything, it means that we cannot turn our backs on tens of millions of families who today are suffering. So we have to make sure that every working individual in America receives at least \$1,200 in direct payment. That is what we have to do. We cannot continue the status quo of simply coming in here to work and then going home and going back for our holiday.

So I am going to do everything I can to insist that we make sure that every working person in this country gets a \$1,200 direct payment, and we are not going to go home until that happens.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

H.R. 6395

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, the best part of any debate is when you see

people twisting themselves in knots, going against their own alleged principles to get their desired result. Today, the subject is war powers. The hawks and the neocons somehow want you to believe, in contrast to all logic, that the President of the United States has the unitary power to go to war anytime he wants, anywhere, free from interference from Congress. That is their stated position anytime war comes up. Yet, today, in the NDAA, they say they now want a President that cannot leave a war without their permission.

How absurd is that? They believe that a President has the power to go to war anywhere, anytime, but when a President tries to remove troops they say: Oh, no, no. What we really want are 535 generals in Congress to tell him he can't leave a war. How absurd is that?

It is exactly the opposite of what both the Constitution and logic would dictate. When Congress tried to impose time limits on troop engagements during the Iraq war, the neocons squawked that it would be a mistake to have 535 generals. They said the execution of the war was a prerogative of the President—until a President decided he wanted to leave a war.

During the Bush administration, Dick Cheney and a team of legal apologists argued for something they call the unitary executive theory. Professor Edelson at American University describes this theory of an all-powerful Commander-in-Chief concept: This unitary executive theory claimed to justify, effectively, unchecked Presidential power over the use of military force, the detention and interrogation of prisoners, extraordinary rendition, and intelligence gathering.

According to the unitary executive theory, since the Constitution assigns the President all of the executive power, he can set aside laws that attempt to limit this power over national security. This is an enormous power. Critics say that it effectively puts the President above the law. But this is the belief of the neocons. They say: "The President is all-powerful," until they say, "Well, unless the President is trying to stop a war, then we must shackle the President with rules and regulations and make sure that he cannot leave a war unless Congress says so." That is what the NDAA will do this year.

These same people who advocated for virtually unlimited Commander-in-Chief powers have put forth limits in this bill to restrain a President from removing troops from a country. Effectively, these neocons put forth a belief that the Commander in Chief has virtually unlimited power to initiate war, but they are just fine with hamstringing and preventing the Commander in Chief from ending a war.

Hypocrisy, anyone? Without a shred of embarrassment, these neocons happily constrain a President from leaving a war theater while they also simultaneously argue for a President who can

start war anytime, anywhere across the globe without congressional authorization. Our Founding Fathers would be appalled.

Primary among our Founders' concerns was that the power to initiate war not be in the hands of one person. As Madison wrote in the *Federalist Papers*, the executive is the branch of government most prone to war. Therefore, the Constitution, with studied care, vested the war-making powers in the legislature.

To our Founders, initiation of war was the sole prerogative of Congress. But a great deal of discretion was given to the President in article II to execute the war. The neocons forever believed in this discretion. They said the war shouldn't be fought by 535 generals in Congress; we should give the President the freedom and power to execute the war. And, largely, they are correct—until they pop their heads up today and say, unless the President wants to stop a war, then we take it all back. What we really want is a President who can't execute a war or execute the end of a war without the permission of Congress.

Likely, our Founders would have agreed with the common complaint that we don't need 535 generals in Congress. In other words, success in war requires most decisions on executing the war to be in the hands of one person—the President. Even I, who have been opposed to most of the recent overseas activities and wars—even I believe that once Congress initiates it, most of the decisions should be made by the President.

The decision to go to war requires the consensus, the initiation—the beginning of war requires the consensus of 535 Members of Congress under the Constitution. It is very clear. They debated it over and over, and they said: Initiation, declaration of war, should be done by Congress. But the execution of the war would largely be left up to the President. Many, many current and former Members of Congress have agreed.

Representative LIZ CHENEY has argued that the nature of military and foreign policy demands the unity of the singular executive and that the Founders certainly did not intend, nor does history substantiate, the idea that Congress should legislate specific limits on the President's powers in wartime.

LIZ CHENEY, who is also, ironically, the author of this amendment to the NDAA, said we shouldn't limit the President's powers in times of war and then she authors a limitation on the President removing troops from war. So which is it? I guess she is only for this unitary power—she is only for this all-powerful Commander in Chief when they fight war. But if a President wants to end a war, oh, no, Congress has to stop them at all costs from ending a war.

I think what comes out of this is that the neoconservative philosophy isn't so

much about a unitary executive, isn't so much about an all-powerful Commander in Chief, the philosophy of these people is about war and substantiating war and making sure that it becomes and is perpetual war.

Senator GRAHAM said the one thing he has been consistent on is that “there is 1 Commander in Chief, not 535” these are his words “and I believe this Commander in Chief and all future Commanders in Chief are unique in our Constitution and have an indispensable role to play when it comes to protecting the homeland. If we have 535 commanders in chief, then we are going to be less safe.”

I guess, except for this bill, which actually creates 535 generals in Congress to tell the President, not just this President—and some of it is anger. It is partisan anger. People don't like President Trump—but this will bind all future Presidents. This isn't just about this President.

When LINDSEY GRAHAM says we don't want 535 Commanders in Chief, if this is his belief, he should vote against this bill because this bill creates 535 Commanders in Chief.

The late Senator McCain said: “It would be a very serious situation where we now have 535 commanders in chief . . . the President of the United States is the only commander.”

Senator INHOFE, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, has said: “We don't need the 535 generals in Congress telling our troops how to win this fight,” except for we are going to pass a bill that I assume all of these folks will vote for that actually creates 535 generals in Congress to say to the President—to this one or any President—that he can't leave the theater in Afghanistan without their permission. It is a tragedy; it is hypocrisy; and it is a terrible bill.

Of course, there is also former Vice President Dick Cheney, who was adamant that the War Powers Resolution, which requires the President to simply report to Congress on matters of war, was unconstitutional as “an infringement of the president's authority as the commander in chief.”

Senator ALEXANDER also said “there is a reason why we don't have 535 commanders in chief or 100 commanding generals each saying charge down this street or over that hill.”

I tend to agree, except for it seems to be one-sided. These people seem to believe that we shouldn't have 535 generals in Congress when it is about initiating war. But when it comes to removing troops from the battle, when it comes to finally coming home after America's longest war in Afghanistan, they all say: Oh, no, no, no. You are wrong. We are not going to let you come home. We are going to restrict and restrain the powers of the Commander in Chief because we don't want to end the Afghan war.

It seems as if the only thing you can conclude is they really don't care about their theory of an all-powerful

Commander in Chief; they care more about perpetuating the Afghan war.

Until recently, this chorus of voices sang of nothing but the almighty, endless powers that Presidents have as Commander in Chief. That is, until a President arrived on the scene who wanted to reduce overseas troop levels and end America's longest war in Afghanistan. Then the promoters of a strong Commander in Chief suddenly jumped ship and began advocating the opposite. They began advocating that 535 Members of Congress should, indeed, become generals and should limit the President's ability to remove troops from Afghanistan.

Which is it? Are you for this unlimited power of the President to commence and execute war or are you only for it when they are initiating war, when they are continuing war, and against Presidential prerogative if the President chooses to end a war?

Shouldn't we call out this hypocrisy? Shouldn't someone stand up and express and expose this rank demagoguery? Shouldn't someone cry foul that the advocates of unlimited Presidential power want it only to apply when that President advocates for war? But the moment a President advocates to end a war or lessen overseas troops and these deployments, he or she must be shackled by 535 generals.

This Defense authorization bill could more aptly be called “A Bill to Prevent the President from Ending the Afghan War.” We never actually give the real titles to the bill, but that would be an accurate title: “A Bill to Prevent the President from Ending the Afghan War.”

As such, any serious advocate for ending the Afghan war should vote against this monstrosity. The neocon advocates for Presidential war powers should own up to their hypocrisy and admit that their love of perpetual war trumps their oft-stated unitary executive theory.

In reality, the neocons are enamored of their theory of unbounded Presidential power only when that power is used to foment war. The minute a President decides to end war, the neocons' true stripes are exposed as they beat their chest and proclaim—as 535 generals might—that the President will not be allowed to remove troops without congressional permission.

This bill sets a very dangerous precedent for limiting a President's power to end war and should be vigorously opposed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The Senator from Missouri.

DUCK BOAT SAFETY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2019

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, July 19, 2018, is a date that we in Missouri won't ever forget. There were 17 people who lost their lives and 11 who were injured in a boating accident on Table Rock Lake. During a severe thunderstorm, a duck boat called Stretch Duck